UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency | Guatemala

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

January to April 2023

Self-employed Salvadorian asylum-seekers working in their food business, strengthened by UNHCR's livelihoods and cash assistance programs in Guatemala. © UNHCR/ Melvin Teleguario.

22,000

people in transit assisted

872

refugees and 2,348 asylum-seekers

983

people (300 families) benefited with cash assistance

KEY FIGURES

(As of April 2023)

To respond to increased numbers of people in mixed movements and identify those with international protection needs, UNHCR in Guatemala has six field offices in Peten, Esquipulas, Izabal, Guatemala, Huehuetenango and Tecun Uman, covering 16 departments. These field offices are located the main transit areas for refugees, asylum-seekers, and others in transit, as they share borders with Mexico, Honduras and El Salvador. The UNHCR operation in Guatemala works closely with the Government and civil society organizations to ensure that people with protection needs have access to territory, documentation, protection referral mechanisms, their most urgent needs met, and access to basic services and durable solutions.

HIGHLIGHTS

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From January to April 2023, UNHCR Guatemala and partners assisted 22,000 people in transit as part of mixed movements. The attention provided included access to territory, registration and documentation, guidance on asylum procedures and international protection, gender-based violence prevention, child protection, and basic needs, among others.

In February, new information and assistance centres for migrants and refugees (CAPMiR) started operating in Huehuetanango and Centra Sur Bus Terminal in Guatemala City to reinforce the national response to people in mixed movements, focusing on identifying international protection needs, supporting Guatemalans at risk and providing appropriate guidance.

As a result of UNHCR's advocacy efforts to promote access to rights and services, the Guatemalan Social Security Institute (IGSS) communicated that they would consider registering asylum-seekers and refugees with their DPI-E (special personal identification document) following adjustments to their internal system. This will contribute to access to decent employment, self-reliance and inclusion into the national social protection system for the people with and for whom UNHCR works.

OPERATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

PROTECT

From January to April, UNHCR and partners provided training in different areas to **1,385 people**, including members of the government and civil society organizations. Training sessions included international protection (676 persons), child protection (174 persons), gender-based violence prevention (216 persons), refugee status determination legal framework (99 persons) among others.

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In February, UNHCR – in the role of leader of the Protection Cluster - held meetings with the humanitarian country team, UN Women, UNFPA, and UNICEF to introduce the Protection Standby Capacity Project (ProCap) Regional Advisor and explain its role in promoting the centrality of protection locally and how it could support related efforts. Additionally, in March, UNHCR participated in a workshop organized by OCHA and presented on the centrality of protection to humanitarian actors in the country, aiming to ensure the transversalities of protection within the humanitarian country team's strategy and response.

RESPOND

UNHCR conducted borders assessments in different crossing points to better understand the contexts and identify potential challenges that persons in need of international protection may face in terms of access to territory, and to better coordinate the response with border authorities, community sources and civil society organizations.

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In January, based on advocacy by UNHCR, Banrural (a national bank) agreed to conduct a pilot registration for refugees holding the identity document DPI-E to open a bank account. This outcome is part of the 2022 bank account pilot project established by UNHCR in 2021 to implement cash transfers for refugees, asylum-seekers, and Guatemalans at risk. UNHCR will keep discussing with Banrural to extend it to all refugees and asylum-seekers.

UNHCR and partners delivered 783 hygiene kits in Izabal and Tecun Uman for vulnerable people in transit (440 men, 304 women, one non-binary, 23 boys and 15 girls). The kits included soap, shampoo, toothbrush and paste, hygienic paper, towels, deodorant, and combs, among other items.

In the context of the Cities of Solidarities initiative, UNHCR liaised with different Municipalities to discuss challenges and opportunities for host and refugee communities. ■

EMPOWER

In January, UNHCR began providing technical support to the "Inter-institutional Coordination Working Group in Favour of Children and Adolescents" to give continuity to the commission route and strategy for protecting children and adolescents from crimes of violence and sexual exploitation.

UNHCR organized and joined different initiatives in Izabal, Peten, Huehuetenango, Tecun Uman, Esquipulas and Guatemala to celebrate International Women's Day. Activities included a march for the rights of women and girls, workshops on gender-based violence prevention, awareness-raising panels, and experience exchange dialogues within the community, among others. In total, more than 1,000 people participated and were sensitized by actions aimed at promoting empowerment and peaceful coexistence. ■

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SOLVE

UNHCR and the Municipality of Guatemala inaugurated a mobile workshop school that offered three weeks of blacksmithing training to different groups around the city. The project directly benefits asylum-seekers, refugees and Guatemalans.

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From January to April, 231 refugees and asylum-seekers (53% women, 45% men and 2% LGBTI) were participating in livelihoods and economic inclusion interventions. Of these, 70% were supported with entrepreneurial services such as training, access to capital seed and small grants, commercialization of goods, services support, and business development. Additionally, 30% are included in wage-earning employment promotion actions, competencies certification, labour inclusion and intermediation.

CAPMiR

Centro de Atención para Personas Migrantes y Refugiadas

Number of total assistances:

15,238

(From January to April 2023)

The Migrants and Refugees Assistance Centers (known as CAPMiR by its acronym in Spanish) are units created to assist people in situations of human mobility in Guatemala. They are part of an alliance led by the Guatemalan Government in coordination with UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM. The main objectives of UNHCR and partners in the CAPMiRs are: Provide essential information and lifesaving services, identify people in need of international protection, and implement appropriate referral mechanisms. From January to April 2023, UNHCR and partners provided 15,238 assistances to 5,213 people in five CAPMiRs located at Guatemala (Centra Sur), Huehuetenango, Peten (Terminal de Flores), Izabal (El Cinchado) and Chiquimula (Agua Caliente).

4,573 INFORMATION & ORIENTATION

80 SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

588 PROTECTION SERVICES

2,110 INTERNET AND CONNECTIVITY

2,574 HEALTH ASSISTANCE

1,720 FOOD KITS

1,964 PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

1,629 OTHERS

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UNCHR´s financial requirements for the Guatemala operation in 2023 (as of 23 May 2023)

Funded: 5.1 million USD (14%)	Unfunded: 32.5 million USD (86%)

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